The art that will be examined in this course has long been taken to represent the highest ideals and aspirations of humanity. Yet many great works of art, notwithstanding their formal and spiritual exaltation, have depended for their manufacture upon the gross exploitation of unremembered men and women, or have represented that exploitation as something beautiful, divine or naturally pre-ordained. The beginnings of an understanding of this dialectic – of beauty and violence, fineness and exploitation, emancipation and oppression – can only be attained by means of sustained looking, reading and study. This course is intended to offer students an opportunity to begin that work.